

COMMON SCHOOL ADVOCATE:

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, MARCH, 1837.

VOL. I. No. 3.

To Subscribers.

This paper has been established for the purpose of promoting Primary Schools in the Southern and Western States. It will be furnished *gratis* to all School Teachers, male and female. It can be sent by mail to any part of the country for a very trifling postage.

Among many eminent teachers who will furnish articles for this paper, are EDWARD D. MANSFIELD, Professor of Constitutional Law in Cincinnati College and Inspector of Common Schools; LYMAN HARRIS, Professor in Cincinnati College and Principal of the Preparatory Department of that Institution; ALEXANDER MCGUFFEY, Professor in Woodward College. It is also expected that Professor Calvin E. Stowe will give the assistance of his pen. Professor Stowe is daily expected from Europe, where he has spent the last year, and will be able to furnish highly interesting information in regard to the systems of instruction in Prussia, Germany, Switzerland, and other parts of the continent.

"The paper will take no part in sectarianism or politics, but the leading object of it shall be to show the influence and importance of schools—to interest the leading prominent men in their improvement—to make known and excite to proper action, the indifference and apathy of parents—to show the want and necessity of well-qualified teachers—to point out the defects in the prevailing systems of instruction, and the evils from bad school government—to suggest remedies for these defects in teaching and government—to recommend proper school books—to describe the wrong structure and location of school-houses, and to suggest plans for their improvement—to prevail on trustees, inspectors and commissioners of schools to be faithful in the performance of their *whole* duties—and, in a word, to urge, by all proper means, every member of the community to give its earnest co-operation with our Common Schools."

All Letters and Subscriptions should be directed, (*post paid*) to the "COMMON SCHOOL ADVOCATE," CINCINNATI, OHIO.—As the Paper is furnished *free of charge*, the publishers will take no Letters from the Post Office upon which the postage has not been paid. This regulation will be strictly observed in all cases.

In selecting matter for this paper extracts have been freely made from the "Common School Assistant," published in the State of New York, and edited by that untiring friend of common schools, J. O. Taylor. Also, from "The Annals of Education," the "School teachers' Friend" by Dwight. The volumes of the "American Institute of Instruction," and many other valuable works not accessible to most teachers.

Common Schools.

The following propositions are true:

I. The prosperity of a community, depends upon the judicious exercise of the sovereign authority; and whether that shall be properly or improperly exercised, will depend on the character for wisdom and virtue of the person or persons possessed of the sovereign authority.

II. The only sovereigns acknowledged in the state are the people who inhabit it; and the only exercise of sovereign power, is the power exercised by the people at the polls of the elections;

Therefore,

III. If the people are wise and virtuous, the state will be prosperous and happy; if the people are ignorant and vicious, adversity and misery will be the consequence.

IV. Whether the rising generation shall be well informed and virtuous, depends upon the manner in which our children are educated; and the good or bad education of our children depends upon the manner in which our common schools are conducted.

RESULT—*The certainty of the enjoyment of property, liberty, and life, depend upon these schools.*

V. If the inhabitants of every town and school district understood and were duly impressed with their true interest, legislative provisions in relation to the conduct and management of schools would be useless, and improper; and it is because that some towns and districts do not know, or neglect to pursue, their true interest in relation to the education of their children, that legislation on the subject is necessary.

What more is wanting?

Teachers duly qualified, who will execute their duty according to the spirit of the instructions of the superintendent.

Does the present system secure the attainment of this great object, this ultimate end for which the school fund was created, and of all legislation on the subject?

It does not. Why?

Because,

1. Many of the school districts, governed by a desire to employ teachers for a reduced compensation, or influenced by neighborhood partialities, select incompetent and unfaithful teachers.

2. The inspectors and commissioners cannot, or do not, refuse to comply with the wishes of the inhabitants of districts, and

therefore license incompetent and unsuitable teachers.

3. If these officers were sternly and independently to execute their duties, cabals would be formed which would oust them from their official stations.—*Common School Assistant.*

To Teachers.

1. Are you qualified for your arduous, difficult and responsible station?

2. Have you soberly and frequently considered the important duties of a teacher?

3. Do you love your business?

4. Do you intend to make teaching a profession, or merely a temporary thing, to be laughed at and dismissed as soon as something more desirable shall offer?

5. Can you sympathize with children?

6. Can you look into the operations of the young intellect, and see how it thinks and how to make it think?

7. Is it your daily and nightly study to excel in your business?

8. Are you endeavoring to make teaching a distinct profession, as well rewarded and as honorable as law or physic, or divinity?

9. Does your library contain all the works, volumes, periodicals, &c. &c. that have been published to assist you in the art of teaching?

10. Are you in manners, in habits, in principles, a good model for your pupils?

11. Do you make your school pleasant?

12. Do you make your scholars understand what they study?

13. Do you make them apply their knowledge to the practical business of life?

14. Have you introduced such books as teach the labors and duties of manhood—such as agricultural, mechanical, civil, &c.

15. Are you faithful to such parents as are indifferent to their children's education?

16. Do you daily examine your government in school? Could this not be improved?

17. Can you not, by talking, by going from house to house, by giving lectures, by introducing improved school books, and a school library, by communications to the press, and by every possible judicious way, do something to elevate the character of the district, and the usefulness of the school?—
[Com. Sch. Ass't.]

Prussian System of Public Instruction.
PART II.

Applicability of the System to the United States.

THE system of public instruction, which we have been considering, however admirable and complete, has grown up under institutions entirely different from our own, and is designed for a people whose circumstances and habits have little resemblance to ours.—It would be unwise, therefore, to attempt to introduce it among ourselves without considerable modification. Our people are not a military people, and they would be very impatient under the restraints of military discipline. Besides, innovations should never be sudden, even when they are desirable; and as an accurate observer has well remarked, 'it were good that men, in their innovations, would follow the example of time itself, which indeed innovates greatly, but quietly and by degrees scarce to be perceived.' Legislation should not be subject to frequent changes; for such changes break up that deep reverence for the laws, which constitute the principal safeguard of a free state. Moreover, laws cannot any where, not even in despotic governments like Prussia, anticipate improvements, and go before the spirit of the people: much less can they do it here, where every thing must depend, at least, on the favor of the people at large.

Yet we can, and must make effort, even by legislation, to give more completeness and efficiency to our system of popular instruction. Enough has already been done to test the spirit of the people, to show that they do appreciate the importance of general education, and to lay the foundation for great and permanent improvements. The constitution of Ohio recognizes the right and duty of the legislature, to provide for the education of the people; and the laws, which from time to time have been enacted with reference to this subject, have carried forward the school system as fast as the circumstances of the state would seem to permit. The legislature of Ohio has always manifested a readiness to adopt suitable means for the enlightening of the public mind. The system of measures for the establishment of district schools, which has already been so wisely commenced—the valuable and judiciously selected state library—and the message of our chief magistrate, calling the legislative attention to the Prussian school system, and recommending still further improvements in our own—are all sufficient proofs of the readiness of our pub-

lic men to further this good work, and of the disposition of the people to sustain them in it.

In considering the modifications in the Prussian system necessary to adapt it to this country, we remark, in general, that among us, more must be left to popular action—to the free choice of the community—and less attempted in the way of positive legislative enactment. In respect to the method of supervision and of enforcing responsibility, the people must, to a greater extent, have the power of electing the superintendents of their schools, and of appointing their own teachers. These superintendents and teachers must be, in some way, directly responsible to them as well as the government. Greater reliance, too, must be placed on the means of simply moral influence, and more patience put in requisition, in the execution of our plans for popular education; for we cannot expect our people to submit to the peremptoriness and precision of military discipline.

The mode of sustaining the expenses of the schools must be different in this country from that which exists in Prussia. There, certain things are peremptorily required to be done, cost what they may, and the community must bear the expense of it—or, if absolutely too poor to do it, they must apply to the government for aid. Here, it is necessary, either that a specific property tax be assessed, and the expenses brought within the amount thus raised, or public funds must be provided; and it must be left to the people to determine, within certain limits, how much they will do beyond the avails of these funds. The latter is the system adopted in the state of New York, and the school laws of Ohio endeavor to combine the advantages of both plans.

The participation of different sects in the management of schools, must be regulated on different principles here from what it is there. There are there, in fact, but two religious denominations of any extent—the protestant and the catholic; and one or the other of these predominates in every community. Besides, the religious differences there are not violent, and there is, comparatively, little of sectarian jealousy. Owing to these circumstances, it is easy to avoid encroachments on the rights and feelings of the different denominations, when legislating expressly with reference to them. But here religious denominations are numerous, of equal responsibility, and possessing equal rights. The district schools, instead of being made up of two, or, at most of three religious sects, often com-

prehend six or eight; and it would be impossible to select teachers and school committees, with reference to the numerical proportions of these different sects, for the purpose of satisfying them. In general, men best qualified for the station of committees and teachers, must be selected without reference to their denominational tenets, and the religious instruction in schools must occupy the common ground on which the different sects are agreed: and there is more of this common ground than people are apt to suppose. All christian sects agree that there is a God, and that the scriptures are the record of his revealed will. They all agree that Jesus Christ is the great Teacher and Savior of mankind, and that our salvation depends, in some way, on his merits and sufferings.—They all agree that the bible contains a perfect exhibition of our duties to God and man, and that all men are under the most solemn obligations to believe its doctrines and obey its precepts; and that there is a day of final retribution for all. Here, surely, is common ground enough to form the basis of a system of religious instruction, sufficiently extensive for any of our educational establishments.

Indeed, few, if any, of the Prussian laws can be adopted without some modification—still there are many great principles involved in these laws, which are worthy of universal adoption, and some of which have already been acted upon here and elsewhere in the United States.

To these principles our attention will now be turned.

1st. The placing of school duty on the same ground with military duty is a sound principle, and ought to be universally acted upon.

By this, I do not mean that our school system should be regulated by martial law; but that the same considerations of public good and of public safety, which make it every man's duty to bear his proportion in the making and repairing of roads, and sustaining the necessary expenses of the government, and oblige him to give his personal services for the defence of the country when invaded, also impose upon him the obligation to educate his children.

The constitution of Ohio clearly recognizes this principle, by placing the superintendence of education among the legitimate objects of legislative action.

If a regard to the public safety makes it right for the government to compel the citizens to do military duty when the country is invaded, the same reason authorizes the gov-

ernment to compel them to provide for the education of their children—for no foes are so much to be dreaded by a republic as ignorance and vice. A man has no more right to endanger the state by throwing upon it a family of ignorant and vicious children, than he has to give admission to the spies of an invading army. If he be unable to educate his children, the state should assist him—if unwilling, it should compel him. General education is a much more certain, and much less expensive means of defence, than military array, and altogether more productive of happiness. A well-qualified body of teachers would develop and bring out all the means of happiness to be found in the nation—while, the most that could be expected, from the best disciplined army of soldiers, would be, that they refrain from corrupting and destroying the people whom they are called to defend. Military operations, at best, are but a dangerous attempt to cure a disease already contracted—but general education, on right principles, operates as a preventive of evil: the one is like the surgeon's knife, amputating and weakening, if not killing; the other, like temperance, preserving uniform health.

Popular education is not so much a *want* as a *duty*. It has been well remarked, that 'if children provided their own education, and could be sensible of its importance to their happiness, it would be a *want*, and might be left to the natural demand and supply; but, as it is provided by the parents, and paid for by those who do not profit by its results, it is a *duty*, and is therefore liable to be neglected.' It is this consideration which renders legislative action on this subject so important and indispensable.

2d. The care for the supply and support of teachers manifested in the Prussian system, is well worthy of adoption in our country.—Teaching should be a profession: the wants of the country can never be adequately supplied till it is so. There are now in our country not less than one and a half million of children destitute of schools, and for them at least twenty thousand teachers are needed in addition to the eighty thousand already employed. But how can men of competent talents venture to make teaching their profession at the present low rate of wages and uncertainty of support? How can they engage in an occupation so laborious, and the severities of which so often bring on premature old age, on a pittance which gives them but a bare subsistence from day to day, and leaves them no provision for seasons of sickness and years

of debility! If we would have competent teachers, we must give them a sufficient and certain support. They should be regarded as public servants, and in time of peace treated as soldiers are in time of war—pensioned, if disabled, and their families provided for if they fall in the service.

Teachers, to command such a support, and to be of real value to the community, must possess high qualifications. Poor teachers will soon bring into disrepute and destroy the best devised system of common school instruction—while good teachers will make their way into the affections and confidence of the people, and cause them to feel the value of education. Our citizens are not deficient in sagacity to discern what is for their real good; and they have always shown their willingness to pay their money for that which they know to be valuable; and they are not to be blamed for their reluctance to give a high price for that which is worth little or nothing. Let a well-qualified and efficient teacher go into the most parsimonious and ignorant town in our state, and stay long enough to make a fair trial of his skill, and the hearts and purses of the parents will be opened, and he will be well sustained. Even under all the disadvantages of meagre support and inadequate preparation, under which our common school teachers at present labor, the school system has been gradually and steadily gaining ground in the affections of the people, as they have seen the benefits of it. How much faster would it have gained, had the teachers been all properly supported and sufficiently qualified.

Well-qualified teachers cannot be provided, unless there are institutions for their education, or departments in this branch of study in the institutions already established. Such institutions have been established, to a considerable extent, by the state of New York, and it is hoped that Ohio will not be tardy in following so good an example.

3d. Another principle of the Prussian school system, which ought to be adopted by us, is the uniformity of language required in all the schools. Whatever may be the popular dialect of the district, the language of the nation and the government must be taught in the schools—not indeed to the exclusion of the vulgar tongue, but in connection with it. This uniformity of language is of great importance to a nation's prosperity and safety. It is necessary as a common bond of union and sympathy between the different parts of the state; and without it, a nation is a bundle of

clans rather than a united and living body.—The facilities of business, and the progress of intelligence, require uniformity of language, and parents have no right to deprive their children of the advantages which a knowledge of the prevailing speech of the country affords, nor to deprive them of the power of doing all the service to the state which they are capable of rendering. If the foreign emigrants, who are among us, choose to retain their native language among themselves, it is well for them to do so; but let them not prevent their children learning English, and becoming qualified for all the duties of American citizens. Children can learn two languages as easily and as rapidly as one; and as Charles V. said, 'so many languages as a man learns, so many times is he a man.'

5th. The Prussian regulations to secure universality and uniformity of attendance on the schools, and to secure the completion of the prescribed course of study, is worthy of universal adoption.

But little advantage can be derived from schools, and but little systematic instruction can be given in them, where the attendance is tardy, interrupted, and too soon discontinued; and these are among the greatest evils which our schools now have to encounter.—Legislation surely is as competent to remedy these evils as it is to enforce military duty, or the making of roads, or the payment of taxes for the support of the government.

5th. The extensive and thorough instruction required by the Prussian system ought to be required among us. It has been seen, that the teachers of common schools, in addition to the elementary branches of science, are required to give instruction in music, drawing, gardening, mechanics, and the various useful arts. By this means all the talent born in the nation of every kind, is called forth and early developed, and every child has the opportunity of discovering his peculiar capabilities, and of making the most of himself.

In this way a vast amount of talent and attainment is secured to the nation, which would, otherwise, have been for ever unknown.

What a rich blessing would such a system of education be to this country, where every kind of talent is in such high demand, and has such entire liberty to expand itself in every desirable direction! It is true, that some men overcome the disadvantages of early life; but how much more could even they have done for themselves and their country could they have begun in season! and how

vast amount of talent has been lost to our country for want of culture at the proper time!

6th. Another feature of the Prussian system, of universal utility, is the constant responsibility of teachers and superintendents, and their regular official reports. Nothing is ever well done without responsibility; and constant responsibility cannot be secured without regular official inquiry into the manner in which duties have been performed. Suitable men should be appointed for examiners and superintendents, and they should receive a reasonable compensation for their services. They are generally men who cannot afford to give their time and labor gratuitously; and even if they could afford it, it ought not to be demanded of them any more than of the jurors and witnesses who attend our courts.

There is also great need of the educational statistics, which would be furnished by the accurate reports of such functionaries; and nothing would more powerfully excite our people to constant exertion in this great work than a correct account of what is actually done, and of what remains undone.—Indeed, I am not sure but the appointment of governmental agents for the express purpose of taking the statistics, in the first instance, would not be the greatest service that the legislature could render to the cause in its present incipient state.

7th. The religious spirit which pervades the whole of the Prussian system, is greatly needed among ourselves. Without religion—and, indeed, without the religion of the bible—there can be no efficient school discipline. No such thing existed in the institutions of Greece and Rome, if we except the stern military institutions of Sparta; and it first commenced in the schools of the christian church. The experience of Germany and France has shown that, in christian communities; school government cannot be maintained without religious influence; and all the experiments in our own country lead to the same result. Religion is an essential element of human nature; and it must be cultivated, or there will be distortion of the intellect and affections. I doubt not it will be conceded that, if any religious instruction is to be given in our schools, the religion of the New Testament is to be preferred to all others; and I have already attempted to show that there is enough of common ground here to unite all the different sects in this great object.

8th. As an improvement on the Prussian system, I would recommend the establishment, in all our school districts, of district libraries, for the use of pupils as well as teachers. In Prussia there are school libraries, but they are designed principally for

teachers, and the children derive but little benefit from them. I need not enlarge upon the advantages of those libraries here, as a bill is already before the legislature providing for their establishment throughout the state.

The present condition of our country demands legislative provision for the three classes of schools most directly essential to the instruction of the people at large: the elementary schools, high schools, and teachers' seminaries. If our republic is to be prosperous and happy, all our children must be instructed in the elements of science and religion. Our youth should receive the instruction necessary to make them intelligent and efficient men of business, and our farmers, mechanics, and manufactures, should be made acquainted with those branches of science most essential to the prosecution of their respective employments. For the accomplishment of these purposes, there must be institutions for the training of well qualified teachers. Other literary institutions, such as colleges, and seminaries for professional education, can, for the present, take care of themselves until, by the operation of our popular schools, the demands of the country for increased facilities of learning shall be so great as to require legislative aid for higher seminaries.

The resources of our people are abundantly sufficient for any amount of expenditure that the wants of the country require. Our large surplus revenue, the income of our public lands, and the rapidly increasing wealth of our private citizens, afford an inexhaustible fund for every useful object.—People value what they pay for; and it is altogether desirable that they should feel the expense of their public schools, provided their burdens be not too heavy. The amount of taxation in this country is so small as to be scarcely felt, and is as nothing when compared with the taxation of every other existing government. Our people are abundantly able to do any thing and every thing that is needed for their own good, or the welfare of posterity.

Here the people are sovereign; and who would voluntarily subject himself to an ignorant sovereign? Yes, my fellow-citizens, you are sovereigns; and, like all other sovereigns, you are very much exposed to flattery. Those who have power are always flattered by those who are striving to obtain it; and the sovereigns of the United States have not escaped the usual lot of such dignitaries; but I hope that flattery will never blind you to the truth, or indispose you to a calm and deliberate examination of facts, as they actually exist. It is a fact, that there is a vast amount of ignorance and vice in our

country; that the increase of our population has far outstripped our present means of education; and that, unless increased and continued efforts are made—efforts, in some good degree adequate to the exigencies of the time—we can have but little hope of retaining the privileges and the preeminence of which we are now so prone to boast. What condition of anarchy can be conceived more dreadful than that of a democracy of ignorant and degraded men, impatient of the restraints of law, and incapable of appreciating the advantages of rational freedom! At present there is enough of intelligence and virtue in the community to hold in check the elements of discord and wickedness; but who can tell how long this will be so, if our uneducated population continue to increase upon us for years to come as rapidly as it has for a few years past?

A mere knowledge of the elements of reading and writing is not sufficient for a people who hold sovereign power in their own hands; it may be even mischievous, by increasing the facilities for corrupting their principles, and depraving their morals. The mind must be disciplined—the heart must be trained—the moral powers exercised, to discern between the good and the bad—the intellect strengthened, to discriminate between the hurtful and the useful.

The Almighty seems now to have permitted a fair experiment to be made, as to which form of government shall do most for the elevation and happiness of a whole people—an absolute sovereignty or popular freedom. One part of this great experiment has been committed to the king of Prussia, and most nobly is he striving to make it good.—The other part is committed to us; and it remains for us to show, that popular freedom can do more for the general happiness than absolute sovereignty, however benevolently directed. Shall this great experiment fail in our hands, and despotism bear away the palm from republicanism?—*Prof. Calvin E. Stowe.*

To Parents.

You wish to store the minds of your children with useful knowledge, and you desire therefore, to cultivate in them a taste for reading. Would not the Advocate be to them a welcome monthly visiter, and therefore have an important influence in forming this taste? Can you in any way do more for the education of your family by the payment of one dollar, than by subscribing for this paper? We say this especially to parents who live in such scattered settlements that they have few or no opportunities of sending their children to school. We conceive that a monthly publication devoted to common school education would be invaluable in such a family.

[For the Common School Advocate.]

Webster's Orthography.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—My attention has been forcibly drawn to the subject of Orthography, by the following article in the January number of the Knickerbocker. This article, I should like to see copied into the Common School Advocate, as that paper circulates mostly among School Teachers—and it is to them particularly, not only as patriots but as parties concerned, that it addresses itself.

The want of uniformity in Orthography has always been a great evil, but not until lately have its worst features appeared. It has been reserved for the present generation to prove, that a want of uniformity in Orthography tends to make a *want* in the pockets of all but the book making portion of the community. From this want of a uniform standard, a multiplicity of school books has arisen, each one claiming for itself some particular merit on this subject, and nearly all of them calculated to increase the evil.

It is one thing to point out evils, but quite another to find the proper remedy. In this case, however, we have a remedy to our hands; and thanks to the fifty years toil, the indefatigable research, and the unflinching application of the mind and talents of Noah Webster, the remedy is complete. There never has been, and there never will be (except built upon this) a Dictionary of the English Language surpassing the Webster Dictionary in correctness. It embraces some thousand more words than any of its predecessors, and all that its successors can do, will be to filch from it, adding only new words as they are coined and come into use, which new editions of this will also include. Where undisputed rules can be obtained for the orthography of words or classes of words, they are made to conform to those rules; when rules can not be obtained, and this is not often—the most simple method is adopted. But it is not necessary for me to detail all the advantages of this most valuable addition to our literature; the simple fact that it contains *fifteen thousand* more words than any other, should be a sufficient reason for its acceptance by those who say we *can have* no standard; and to those who desire a standard, and will examine for themselves, this book will recommend itself.

Webster's Orthography is now being adopted by most of the leading scientific publications of the day; by some of our most prominent literary institutions; and in congressional documents, and by very many of those who have aided much in bringing about the confusion of tongues among us—the gentlemen of the Press. The school master who would not become *obsolete*, will ere long be obliged to adopt it, and let those pa-

rents who do not wish their children to be called bad spellers, in after years, see to it, that they are taught *Webster's Orthography*. We must have a standard; there is no other for which a plausible argument can be advanced; therefore this must be the one.—I, am a parent—I have been drilled in the various orthographies until I hardly know how to spell *ab*, not being quite certain it should not be *abe*; and I am determined that my children shall learn but one way to spell, and that way shall be Websters.

[From the Knickerbocker.]

“The great *American Dictionary* of Dr. Webster attracts less attention and respect, at this moment, than it will a century hence. The public do not fully know the sources of the frequent paltry and illiberal attacks upon this work, or they would give them less weight and consideration. The tribe of elementary book-makers in this country is very numerous. They engross, indeed, almost the only profitable branch of literary labor. The compilers of school-dictionaries, spelling-books, reading-lessons, etc., etc., are arrayed in a body against the American Dictionary, because, if its principles prevail, many of their books will be supplanted.—The publishers of these heterogeneous productions, and all who re-publish English dictionaries, have a common interest in depreciating the merits of our American lexicographer. A little reflection will suggest, that these various interests embrace a numerous host, who are strongly stimulated by self-interest, who wield ready pens, and exert a controlling influence over many periodicals. They are indefatigable in their efforts. I have before me an examination of Dr. Webster's publications, by one of these spelling-book makers, the compilation of which must have cost the labor of several months. It fell, still-born, from the press; for it is disfigured with personal abuse and ignorance; but it serves to illustrate the zeal and true value of the opposition to which I allude.

Of the *seventy thousand* words, defined in the American Dictionary, there may be some twenty or thirty, the derivation and orthography of which, by isolation from the author's explanations and principles, can be invested with the appearance of ridiculous novelty. These few examples, paraded before the public by the diligence of secret enemies, and not examined in the spirit of generous criticism, have, in some measure, created an unjust prejudice against a valuable work. But is this a fair test by which to try the value of the product of twenty laborious years? or, as it may truly be said, of *fifty years*, for that full period has been devoted by the author to the study of the English language. Is it not an indication of a

habit of superficial judgement, and of superficial scholarship, in the American public, that with regard to a work of this magnitude, and of confessed erudition, they will be influenced by a distaste for some fore-score modifications of orthography? In so vast an undertaking, can entire exemption from error be expected? And is it not reasonable to suppose that, here and there, a conclusion may have been adopted by the author which may fail to satisfy the world?

The American Dictionary has been splendidly re-published in England, under the supervision and by the recommendation of one of the most eminent English scholars. In that country, so far as I can learn, it has been every where spoken of with respect and commendation. I confess I feel on this subject some degree of national pride; nor can I read, without pain, the flippant censures bestowed by those who have neither the adequate learning, or capacity, upon a work, in which the author has embodied the results of a more thorough and laborious research into the origin and philosophy of the English language, than was ever made by any other man; especially when I remember that this author is *my countryman*; that he has devoted a long life to the interests of letters; that in his early years, he was the esteemed friend and correspondent of Washington, Franklin, Hamilton, and Jay; and that his anxiety to perfect his great work induced him, in the evening of his days, in despite of extraordinary obstacles, twice to cross the Atlantic, that he might avail himself of materials not to be found in this country. Whenever I chance to discover something inconsistent with my preconceived notions, in the productions of so learned and laborious a writer, I am forced rather to distrust my own qualifications, than to pronounce a hasty condemnation.

I am persuaded you will take pleasure in directing the attention of scholars, both in Europe and America, to a work, of which, whatever be its occasional defects, our countrymen have reason to be proud.”

NOTE.—It is well known that Webster's Orthography has been unjustly attacked and grossly misrepresented by a few book-selling critics, who are fully convinced that their pockets will be diminished by the extensive patronage that has been bestowed upon the valuable productions of this great and good man. It is not denied that his works are not altogether and perfectly faultless.—The magnitude of his Dictionaries, and the amount of labor requisite to bring them to a tolerable degree of perfection, renders it sur-

prising that any human production should be so free from errors and inconsistencies as are his Dictionaries. In the earlier editions of his Philological works, some few errors escaped the critical eye of their author, but they have long since been corrected.

Numerous schools in our country still adhere to the use of school books that teach Walker's mode of spelling and pronunciation—while at the same time the usage of a great portion of our most respectable public journals, and nearly all of the best writers, both in England and the United States, furnish conclusive evidence, that Webster's Orthography will obtain general prevalence.

Now we would ask every teacher and parent if it is desirable to teach a child to spell *arithmetick, publick, musick, candour, honour*, etc. according to Walker, when the moment the child is able to read a common newspaper, he will find the same words spelled—*arithmetic, public, music, candor, honor*, etc. etc. ?

We are fully convinced that Webster's Orthography, as a whole, is more uniformly faultless than any other extant, and we are much gratified that Webster will be adhered to in the Eclectic Series, by Mr. M'Guffey. The circulation of this series will afford good facilities for adopting a uniform and desirable standard in this department of a primary education.

Philosophical Education.

Extract from William. H. M'Guffey.

No man can teach, who is destitute of mind. No child can be taught, who is without the ordinary faculties of the mind. Nor can the mind of the instructor be made to operate upon the mind of the pupil without an intelligent employment of the means, necessary to mutual intercourse.

It is plain, then, that mind is the agent in the business of education, and the instrument, and the object. It is the mind that operates; it is the instrument with which the teacher puts in requisition the means of instruction, and it is the object upon which the instructor expends his skill.

It must be obvious then, that, in order to complete success, the teacher must understand the powers and susceptibilities of that agent, the mind, which is constantly and ne-

cessarily employed in every attempt to give instruction. If this is not the case, all his doings must be at random.

No one would be thought likely to succeed in business, who did not understand nor regard the character and abilities of the agents whom he employed. They might be honest, but they would be misdirected, or left to pursue their way without instructions of any kind.

Such is too much the case in every profession; but more lamentably true of the profession of teaching.

* * * * *

The living subject is a better study in mental as well as in material physiology than dried specimens, however well selected or perfectly preserved. There are in the ranks of professional teachers, many who have never read a single work on Systematic Metaphysics, who nevertheless have, from observation and experience alone, acquired a more profound, and what is better, a much more practical acquaintance with the human powers and susceptibilities, than falls to the share of any mere book learned pretender to philosophy. Nothing more is wanting to a great majority of those already engaged in the business of instruction, than that they should have their attention turned to this matter in order that their success might be complete. They have the talent. They have the intelligence. They have the industry. They can command the attention of their pupils—a task harder to perform than to command the attention of the largest audiences; they can and do communicate to the minds of their pupils their own mental movements. What then do they need but to make their profession a science as well as an art. Let no one in our ranks despair. The most eminent men in all the liberal professions in our country have found their way through the "school house" to their present elevation. And if they can rise from such beginnings to the highest eminence in other professions, why may they not rise still more easily to the highest rank in their profession as teachers—an eminence it will not be disputed, still greater than the same rank in most other professions?

"The man," said an intelligent citizen of this city very recently, "who has reached the head of his profession as an instructor of youth, must be admitted to occupy higher ground than the most distinguished member of the other professions. What merely professional man in our land, would not envy the more than desirable reputation of the veteran

instructor of youth, who has grown gray in the service of the most valuable part of his fellow citizens, the youth of his country?—Who, in old age is so likely always to be distinguished by the members of his profession as the aged teacher? Who can meet his fellow citizens of all ranks in society, on grounds that preclude debate and contention, except it be the aged and eminent instructor of youth? In politics, party spirit prevents this. In literature rivalry will prevent. In religion, sectarian views always have prevented it, and it is to be feared, always will. It is only in education, that the foul fiend of discord has not found, and may we not hope, can find no entrance.—*Academician.*

Uniformity in Orthography.

"Great attention is now given to the subject of education, and it is certainly a subject of universal concern. In this all men are agreed. But in the use of elementary books for the instruction of youth in our native language, there is no general agreement; and the great variety of books of this kind, no two of which are alike in orthography and pronunciation, is a great evil. This evil ought to be removed.

It is not probable that a perfect uniformity of pronunciation can be effected; but a uniformity of orthography ought to be introduced and preserved. The same words should be always written with the same letters. This can never be the case while so many books, compiled by different hands, and all differing in the orthography of many words, are used in our schools.

Dr. Webster has devoted a long life to this object: he has compiled the best dictionary in the language, and reduced to uniform orthography many classes of words, in which there has before been no uniformity: he has corrected the most obvious mistakes in the English spelling: he has crossed the Atlantic, and ascertained the pronunciation of English speakers.

The general use of one series of elementary books, of uniform orthography, is the only practicable mode of giving uniformity to orthography. Such general use of books in schools, and by editors and printers of public papers, would soon accomplish the object, and we should have a *National Language*. For this purpose, individuals must make concessions of some of their peculiar opinions; but this would be a small sacrifice to so valuable an object."

The Eclectic Third Reader.

This book made its appearance about one week since. It contains a very choice selection in prose and poetry.

Each lesson is preceded by a plain rule for reading; and is followed with directions for avoiding common errors in pronunciation, a selection of the most difficult words which are to be defined—questions on the subject of the lesson, etc. etc. It is an ingenious, useful, and *practical* work; its *merit* will sufficiently recommend it. It is in the finest style of typographical execution: neatly and *durably* bound.

A new Spelling Book.

THE ECLECTIC PROGRESSIVE SPELLING BOOK, on a new and improved plan, showing the correct sound of each syllable in every word, on the most approved principles of english orthoepy. By A. H. McGuffey—*In Press*.

The proprietors of the "Eclectic Series" have been often solicited to connect a Spelling Book with the "Readers," and after due reflection upon the subject, have determined on furnishing a book which will doubtless be critically correct, and at the same time suited to the capacity of the young learner.

The Eclectic Spelling Book will commence with the *simplest elements* of our language; will advance step by step, by a regular and very *easy* gradation, until it shall embrace every thing necessary or suitable for a spelling book for common schools. The *plan* of the book is much admired by those teachers who are acquainted with it, for its plain, easy, progressive arrangement and adaptation for imparting to the pupil an *accurate* knowledge of the elements of the english language. The orthography of Dr. Webster will be adhered to.

Practical Questions.**TO PARENTS.**

1. What is the character, and what are the qualifications of the teacher who is *now* in your school, giving daily instruction to your children?

2. Is your school-house comfortable, well located, and well supplied with fuel and a good wood house?

3. How often have you visited the school this winter? How often have you visited the common school during the last five years?

4. How often do you examine your children at home, to find out the influence of the school and the progress the children are making in their studies?

5. Have you provided your offspring with the necessary school books?

6. Have you furnished your school with an apparatus?

7. Do you make the teacher 'board round,' or does he board at one place, near the school house, where he can have an opportunity to study?

8. Do you, by not furnishing suitable clothing, or, through carelessness, or criminal indulgence, permit your children to idle their time at home, when they should be in school?

9. Do you keep them at home one day and send them to school the next?

10. Do you give them so many "choars" in the morning, that they are not able to reach school till near noon?

11. Do you offer every facility for getting your children to school *every day*, and in good season?

12. Do you keep the family quiet, or open a separate room, that the children may study evenings?

13. Do you daily present good examples to your children, by showing them the happiness and usefulness of knowledge?

14. What is your government over your children?

15. Does it fit them to respect and obey the teacher?

16. Does your family government qualify your children to govern themselves?

17. Lastly; which do you labor most for, and which are you most desirous of giving your children, *knowledge or wealth?*—*Com. School Assistant.*

Toast—Rev. Mr. Dewey.

"*Common Schools*—As fatal to anarchy, misrule and licentiousness as they are propitious to healthful liberty."

The Rev. Mr. Dewey being then called up, made the following remarks:

Mr. President—If I wished to make an address on the subject of common schools, I would not desire a better text than the toast which has just been announced from the chair. For it recognizes precisely the principles that connect free schools with civil liberty. It has been constantly said, and not more constantly than truly, that education is the parent of freedom: I believe that it is also its guardian. Free schools are doubtless the nurseries of liberty; but they must also lift up around the barriers and bulwarks that shall protect it.

Why is this so, sir? Why do free schools make free men? I answer, because education

raises them up to the consciousness that they are men. Because it develops the human powers into thought, which is essentially and in itself free, and never can be satisfied without freedom. Because it makes men conscious that they have rights, and duties, and destinies, and all of these belong essentially to the empire of freedom. Because it spreads the Bible before them—that great charter of liberty—the magna charta of the world's freedom. Because it strips off from every despotic power and privileged order, the glittering robes that invest it, and shows that those who wear them are themselves but men; with no interests, rights and claims superior to those of other men.

And again, sir, free schools make a free people, because education teaches men to respect themselves. It is not only that it teaches them their power. The power of numbers is an obvious consideration; it requires but little intelligence to comprehend it. A horde of Asiatic slaves might have sense enough to perceive that. But the eye that is set in the soul of bondage cowers like that of the brute, before the eye of a master. Education does not so much make men able to be free, as it makes them dare to be free. Yes, sir, in cultivated, conscious, and fearless humanity, lie the foundations of freedom, I am willing to take a bond of humanity itself, for the support and progress of civil liberty.

PARENTS leave the education of their children too much with the schoolmaster. You appear to think that providing your offspring with food and clothing is all that is required of you: the education, the formation of the character, you say, belongs to the teacher. This cannot be so. Your example, companions, opinions, and expressions, will unite with the teacher's instructions. You should, instead of trusting all to the teacher, co-operate with him, unite your labors with his, and ascertain the influence of the teacher and the influence of the school.

Do not speak unfavorably of the teacher before your children, but teach them to love the instructor and the school-room, and at all times to be obedient. If your children are under a good government at home, it will greatly aid the teacher in managing them at school; but, if the government at home is bad it will be difficult for the instructor to control their conduct, or establish any government over them during the school hours. You often complain of the defective government of the teacher, yet do not perceive that the children at home are under no restraint. You, perhaps, have indulged them in every whim and desire; subdued but few of their vicious inclinations; suffered them to grow up disobedient and inattentive: and now, how can you expect the teacher to bring them under an orderly, respectful behavior at school?

TO TEACHERS AND PARENTS.

A warm friend of common Schools has said, 'Among the duties of the guardians of public education, it is one thing to provide the ways and means in support of the cause, another to obtain competent teachers, and last, to furnish them, as you would the mechanic or the artist, if you would expect the best result from their labors, with proper tools and materials—that is to say, with the best books. Money lavished in the purchase of inferior books, is not only lost; but that time, which is the most precious to the young for improvement, is gone, and cannot be redeemed.'

The friends of education are requested to examine the 'ECLECTIC SERIES.' Their merit will, doubtless, gain for them a wide circulation, and they are recommended to all Teachers who wish to introduce good books.

NEW SCHOOL BOOKS,---ECLECTIC SERIES.

Published and for sale at the "Cincinnati School Book Depository," by TRUMAN & SMITH:—Pittsburg, by J. N. Patterson & Co.: Wheeling, by J. Fisher & Son: Louisville, by Morton and Smith: Nashville, by W. A. Echbaum: Lexington, by A. T. Skilman: Natchez, by Pearce and Beanson: New Orleans, by Hotchkiss & Co.: St. Louis, by Turnbull: Cleveland, by Strong & Co.: Dayton, by Barratt & Brown, Columbus, M. Bell.

THE ECLECTIC PRIMER; with pictures, to teach young Children how to Spell and read. By W. H. McGuffey. In press.

THE ECLECTIC PROGRESSIVE SPELLING BOOK, arranged on a new plan. By A. H. McGuffey. In press.

THE ECLECTIC FIRST READER; for young children consisting of progressive Lessons in Reading and Spelling in easy words of one and two Syllables. Illustrated with numerous handsome Pictures. By W. H. McGuffey. Stereotyped.

THE ECLECTIC SECOND READER; consisting of interesting progressive Lessons in Reading and Spelling, intended for the younger Classes in Schools.—Illustrated with handsome Engravings. By William H. McGuffey. Stereotyped.

THE ECLECTIC THIRD READER; containing choice Lessons in Prose and Poetry; with plain Rules and Directions for avoiding common errors. By W. H. McGuffey. Just published.

THE ECLECTIC FOURTH READER; a selection of Exercises in Reading, from standard American and English Authors; with Rules and Directions. By W. H. McGuffey. In press.

The above Readers are by Wm. H. McGuffey, President of Cincinnati College; late Professor in Miami University, Oxford.

It is believed, that the ECLECTIC READERS are not equaled by any other series in the English language.—Professor McGuffey's experience in teaching, and special attention, in early life, to the department of reading and spelling—his peculiar acquaintance with the wants of the young mind—and his enthusiastic interest in the promotion of common schools, render him most admirably qualified for his undertaking. This series of Readers is the result of much labor. In preparing the two first books, he has taken a class of young pupils into his own house, and has taught them spelling and reading for the express purpose of being able to judge with the greatest accuracy of the best method of preparing the Reading Books. The Lessons and Stories which he has adopted in the First and Second Books, are probably the most simple, and yet the most instructive, amusing and beautiful for the young mind that can be found in our language. The Third and Fourth Books, being in regular gradation above the First and Second, are made up of beautiful and chaste selections

from prose and poetry: the whole forming a progressive series, (of excellent moral tendency) peculiarly adapted to the purpose of instruction.

THE ECLECTIC ARITHMETIC; or the Principles of Calculation on the analytic and inductive Method of Instruction; with a concise System of Book-keeping; designed for Common Schools and Academies. By Joseph Ray, Professor of Mathematics in the Woodward High School, Cincinnati; late Teacher of Arithmetic in that Institution. In press.

The Eclectic Arithmetic combines mental exercises with the use of the slate, making a very complete system for all practical purposes—being in dollars and cents.

RAY'S LITTLE ARITHMETIC; Prepared expressly for the Eclectic Series. Stereotyped.

Ray's Little Arithmetic consists of tables, Questions and Exercises, to employ the mind and fingers; designed to go before the slate and prepare for it. It is very simple, clear, progressive, and adapted to the capacities of young children. Several thousands have been sold in a short time, and it is considered the best intellectual Arithmetic for young beginners ever published.

RAY'S TABLES AND RULES; in Arithmetic, for Children. Prepared expressly for the Eclectic Series. Stereotyped.

A careful examination of these Arithmetics will show that their Author (who is a very successful teacher of arithmetic and mathematics) has prepared them—as all books for school uses ought to be prepared—from the results of actual experiment and observation in the school room. They are comprehensive, containing twice the usual quantity of matter in works of this class; and by judicious arrangement in printing, are rendered the cheapest books in this department of education.

The Eclectic System of Instruction now predominates in Prussia, Germany, and Switzerland. It is in these countries that the subject of education has been deemed of paramount importance. The art of teaching particularly, has there been most ably and minutely investigated.

The Eclectic System, 'aims at embodying all the valuable principles of previous systems, without adhering slavishly to the dictates of any master, or the views of any party. It rejects the undue predilection for the mere expansion of mind, to the neglect of positive knowledge and practical application.'

It is often asked, 'why have we so many inferior school books, and so few which are really meritorious and adapted to the purposes of instruction?'

This question though often asked, may be easily answered. Want of adaptation to their work on the part of the authors, is, undoubtedly, the true cause, to which may be attributed the ill success of many of those who attempt to prepare books for the school room.

Upon the same principle that a mechanic, or any other person, seldom attains success in more than one art—so, also, it must be admitted, that no one man can expect to succeed in preparing books for every department of the school. A man may possess eminent attainments as a scholar, and be very familiar with the sciences but still he may not 'be apt to teach,' nor even successful in preparing one of the most elementary works for primary schools.

Again: A person may be highly successful in the preparation of an Arithmetic, and receive the well-merited praise and thanks of a large number of teachers and parents, for his admirable adaptation of principles to the juvenile mind—and yet utterly fail in preparing a Grammar, or a work on Geography; and for the simple reason, that his powers are not adapted to that particular department.

In preparing the ECLECTIC SERIES, the principle of division of labor has been adopted, and the books for the different departments have been assigned to different individuals—to men of a practical character, who

are extensively known as successful teachers in the branches they have undertaken, and who know the wants of schools from actual experiment and observation in the school room.

The ECLECTIC SERIES will be extended as fast as a due regard to the interests of the books will admit.—It is intended that not a single work will be admitted into the series unless it be considered decidedly better for purposes of instruction, than any other of its kind extant.

It is the determination of the publishers to have the whole series of books handsomely printed on a fair type and good paper—to have them well bound, and to sell them at low prices.

School Committees and Teachers will be gratuitously supplied with copies of the above books for examination, on application to any of the publishers.

[From Miss C. E. Beecher, late Principal of the Hartford High School—and of the Western Female Institute of Cincinnati.]

The great variety and constant change of school books, is an evil expensive to parents, and troublesome to teachers and pupils. Those whose opinions may be sought as having any measure of influence in introducing such works, have some opportunity to diminish this evil by adopting the general principle, that they will examine books when solicited, and recommend only such as are decided improvements on any previous ones, and withhold any favorable opinion from such as are not. In accordance with this principle, I have, by request, examined the "Eclectic Readers," and am decidedly of opinion that they unite more advantages than any other works of the kind, which, after extensive opportunities for examination, have yet come to my knowledge. The advantages consist in a combination of excellencies that are scattered in many works, but united so far as I know, only in this. Among these may be mentioned, adaptation of the style and sentiment to the taste and capacity of children—progressive increase in maturity of style, language, and sentiment, according to the increased advancement, or age of pupils—spelling-lessons selected from the reading-lesson—questions on the reading-lessons calculated to make children exercise their various faculties, and interest them in the lesson—exercises to promote correct pronunciation, and finally a superior style of getting up the work which it is hoped will render it more durable than many school-books, that often fall to pieces after a few weeks use.

30,000 Eclectic School Books.

The "Eclectic Series" was undertaken for the purpose of furnishing to the West and South, a complete, uniform and improved set of School Books commencing with the alphabet. A part of the Series has been issued but a short time. Thirty thousand copies have been printed and nearly all sold. The unequalled patronage and approbation which has been bestowed upon the published part of this series is the best evidence of their merit.

Numerous Teachers, School Trustees, and Directors, have resolved on the immediate adoption of these books.